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News

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Learners should not be used in service delivery protests - Shongwe



MEC for Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Vusi Shongwe and Masizakhe Senior Secondary School learners during his school visits. Story in page 13



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Editorial

As the edition lends in your hands, you will now realize that the dust around road crashes and fatalities has settled but what remains though is the pain and suffering for the families of those who lost their loved ones.

As some of you will be cherishing the memories of having spent quality time with your families, let us spare a thought for those who have lost their loved ones as a result of these crashes.

I am sure that you have seen and heard in the media how well we did not do as a country and a province to bring the number of fatal crashes down. On average 42 people lost their lives on the road every day in this country during the holiday season.

South Africa has one of the best road networks in the world and that auger well for the economy of the country and its development thereof.

Therefore roads are also in linking various places and we need good road networks for both business and pleasure. We therefore should not allow a situation where our roads

become killing fields due to attitudes of some of the road users. Hence we are once more calling for more responsible road usage because most of the crashes that claim so many lives could have been avoided had more care been taken.

While there are law enforcers, they cannot be at every street corner to ensure that motorists obey the traffic rules. Let us therefore make road safety fashionable and let it now become our business wherever we go.

We should now become road safety ambassadors in our homes, workplaces, churches and even social clubs. Let us report any bad driving or unsafe road usage to the authorities.

We do not need to wait until we lose someone close to us before we take action. It is not only the responsibilities of those who own vehicles; it is also the responsibility of those who use the road as passengers because they too become affected when crashes occur.

Hence we are encouraging public transport commuters to also report drivers who are transporting them



Mr. Joseph Mabuza

in an unsafe manner. Public Transport owners should also stop placing profits before the lives of other people by ensuring that their vehicles are roadworthy at all times and that their drivers are fit particularly when they drive long distances.

Those who transport goods and people must also refrain from grossly overloading their vehicles.

It does not have to be traffic officials at weighbridges who stop overloaded vehicles because all vehicle owners know the weight that their vehicles are supposed to carry. Let us all strive to use the road responsibly and save lives.

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SAFETY TIPS

- What must you do as a parent to protect your children against firearm violence?
- Teach your children that a firearm is a deadly weapon and not a toy;
- Make sure that your firearms are being kept in a safe and that your children do not get hold of the keys of the safe
- Teach your children that an airgun is still a dangerous weapon.
- If you decide that your children are ready, you can train them in safe handling of a firearm.

Disclaimer

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Free State MEC supports Mpumalanga operations



MEC Vusi Shongwe welcoming his Free State counterpart MEC Butana Komphela at a roadblock on N4 Toll Road near Belfast.

Butana Komphela Free State Police, Road and Transport MEC came to Mpumalanga to support one of the Festive Season operations that the department conducted shortly before Christmas.

The operation, which was a multi-disciplinary roadblock, was staged on N4 Toll Road near Belfast.

During the operations, Komphela and his Mpumalanga counterpart, Vusi Shongwe worked with law enforcement officers and other

stakeholders in an operation that lasted for nearly four hours.

Komphela pointed out that it was important for law enforcement agencies to work together particularly SAPS and traffic in order to reduce road crashes.

He also stated that the war on road crashes will only be won if drivers also came to the party by complying with road rules and are also considerate towards other road users. "We should work together to make our roads safer during the holidays and

beyond. Traffic officers should not have any mercy on errant drivers," Komphela said.

At the same operation 10 vehicles which were not roadworthy were impounded while 20 motorists were issued with notices to discontinue their vehicles.

Out of 1057 vehicles stopped and checked, 192 drivers were issued with summonses for various offences ranging from failure to produce driving licenses, worn out tyres, indicators not working properly and operating vehicles without registration plates.

Law enforcement officers further collected R51 000 in outstanding fines through Nyamsoro. Nyamsoro is an automated number plate recognition vehicle which is used to identify motorists who have outstanding summonses by reading the vehicles' number plates and driving licences.

With Nyamsoro, motorists are allowed to pay on the spot through electronic payment system that is fitted in the vehicles.



By: Justice Nyalunga

Transport Deputy Minister Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga says the number of people who die or are injured as a result of road crashes is unacceptably high and that drivers need to change their behavior so that roads become safer.

According to Chikunga, the country has over 35 million road traffic offences recorded since 2013 and those who were affected by negligent and bad driving include children.

Hence, on behalf of the Department of Transport she endorsed Operation Sethu Road Safety initiative launched by Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Vusi Shongwe at Pankop in Dr. JS Moroka Local Municipality in November last year.

The Deputy Minister says she believes the campaign will assist other already existing programmes on child and youth safety on the road.

Chikunga also mentioned that she support the programme because most of the time an emphasis has been placed on adult road users.

She says the programme will go a long way to highlight child safety on the road.

Programmes that she highlighted included the national road safety debates by learners, scholar patrols, awareness campaigns about safety of the learners on the road and Participatory Education Techniques (PET). She said it was important for the learners to know the rules of the road because they are not only passengers but they also use bi-



From left to Right: Ms. Nomsa Mtshweni (Social Development MEC), Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga (Transport Deputy Minister), MEC Vusi Shongwe and Ms. Rhoda Mathabe (Dr. JS Moroka Local Municipality Mayor)

cycles as a means of transport to schools.

On the other hand, MEC Shongwe says Operation Sethu will assist in curbing unnecessary crashes that claim the lives of children on the road.

Among others, the campaign will be used to intensify road safety education with a special emphasis on learners and children aged between eight and 13 years.

During the launch, the MEC also announced that the department will conduct an audit of all fatalities which involved children and determine whether the affected families were adequately assisted. The MEC says he believes the campaign will assist in changing the attitudes of road users towards the safety of children.

He said: "we want to identify all dangerous roads, particularly those that are near primary schools and ensure that neces-

sary safety measures are put in place.

However, we also aim to intensify learner education on road safety." Transportation of school children also came under the spotlight.

MEC Shongwe is calling on motorists to be extra careful when approaching vehicles loading and offloading learners at various schools.

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Motorists should abide by traffic rules in order to reduce road crashes



Public Transport operators should play their part in road safety by ensuring roadworthiness of their vehicles

He has further called on public transport owners to ensure that they transport learners in vehicles that are roadworthy.

Shongwe warned drivers that law enforcement officers will also monitor their behaviour in residential areas where children are playing on the side of the road. According to him, the operation and its activities will not only place an empha-

sis on arresting and punishing offenders but road safety education will also be highlighted.

Shongwe also decried the effects of intoxicated drivers on the safety of children, saying the country should deal decisively with people who drink and later places the lives of children in danger. According to Shongwe, government's efforts to deal with road safety

could be weighed down by corrupt officials saying law enforcement officers should refrain from taking bribes as they put children and other road users' lives at risk.

He has also called on driving schools to ensure that they produce competent drivers who are properly trained.

The MEC says the driving schools should stop the tendency of colluding with corrupt testing officials who sometimes issue driving licenses to incompetent drivers.

He also cautioned parents from allowing under age children to drive vehicles because such actions undermine government's work to boost road safety.

He says parents should wait until their children are ready to go to driving schools and are properly licensed before they allow them to drive.

The launch was supported by the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA), Nkangala District Municipality, Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality, traditional leadership and SAPS.

By Moeti Mmusi

Women should not be pressured to withdraw abuse cases - MEC Shongwe



MEC Vusi Shongwe and Mbombela Local Municipality Mayor Sibusiso Mathonsi walking into Msogwaba Sports Ground while community display anti abuse placards.

Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Vusi Shongwe said that women who become abused should not be afraid to open cases so that perpetrators face the consequences of their actions.

Shongwe was speaking during the Provincial launch of 16 Days of Activism Against Women and Children abuse in Pienaar near Mbombela in December last year.

The MEC said that the problem with abuse cases was that most of the women were afraid to open cases against their abusers because they were either bread winners or were of particular standing in a society.

He said that victims should report to the police and also assist the police to investigate such cases so that they are resolved.

“Our women must stand their ground and stand by their statements even in the most difficult and trying times,” he said.

As part of fighting the scourge of gender based violence, the MEC further called on traditional leaders to instil proper cultural practices and moral values among the people that they lead.

According to the MEC, the abuse of women and children is a reflection on the society’s moral standing and therefore, abuse is a societal problem which should collectively be addressed by all.

He said that although violence against women and children takes place behind closed doors, the community should intervene as part of rectifying moral decay in the society.

Shongwe also said: “if we have a community with good morals, we cannot produce old men who will rape a one year old baby, a boy who will rape and kill an 80 year old woman.

“A community grounded on morals will not produce a person who can take a *panga* and kill a woman.

Such heartless people must be exposed, isolated and dealt with even before they can commit their evil deeds.”

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The MEC further said non-governmental organizations (NGOs), churches sports clubs and other society formations must also play their role in the fight against gender based violence.

The impact of alcohol abuse on women and child abuse was also highlighted with the MEC saying some mothers neglect their children when they are drunk and even abuse them emotionally.

Shongwe also lambasted men who stay at taverns until late only to go home and abuse their partners and children.

He has called on liquor outlets owners to ensure that they comply with the law by among others not allowing children in their establishments.

Speaking at the same event, Mpakeni Traditional Council Chief Sicelo Nkosi has encouraged community members to report abuse cases to the police.

The chief said that abuse cases that are solved in families often prejudices victims and justice can only be served if the police are given space to deal with such cases.

Chief Nkosi also pleaded with the community to harmoniously live with one another. He also called on parents to teach their children well so that they do not become easy targets for evil doers. He added that as he presides over some of the domestic violence

cases in this jurisdiction, he has observed that some of the rifts between mothers in law and their daughters in law.

The Chief said that the families should always try to peacefully co-exist with each other. At the same event, one of the resident received a wheel chair from the provincial government while other identified community members received assistance in the form of agricultural starter packs.

Learners from five identified schools were also presented with uniforms while others were also

presented with Dignity sanitation packs that will last for six months.

The packs were donated by National Youth Development Agency (NYDA).



Abuse cases should not be withdrawn so that perpetrators could be punished.

By: Moeti Mmusi



PERFECT PICTURES

16 Days Of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children



Operation Sethu Launch in Pankop



Festive Season Roadblocks



PERFECT PICTURES

16 Days Of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children



Operation Sethu Launch in Pankop



Heavy motor vehicles are no big deal to female drivers



One of the competitors, Ms. Zandile Hlatshwayo doing a pre trip inspection before taking to the road.

Although the heavy motor vehicle industry is dominated by men, Mpumalanga female drivers say they are not threatened.

Instead they are more committed to excel in order to encourage other women who still think the industry is for men only.

This is the sentiments shared by 18 determined women who were among the 72 drivers that participated in the Provincial Driver of the Year (DOTY) Competition finals that were held at Secunda in October last year.

The DOTY competition is an annual road safety contest that has been running for over two decades.

Drivers of heavy motor vehicles compete to promote responsible driving while enhancing driving

skills on heavy motor vehicles' drivers.

These drivers test each other skills in various categories, such as Female Bus driver, Male Bus driver, Rigid, Rigid plus 4 wheel trailer, Articulated truck and 3, 5 ton delivery.

Ms Zandile Hlatshwayo of Mega Bus in Gert Sibande was the only female driver competing with eleven men in the Articulated Category.

Hlatshwayo started driving in 2008 with a code 10 (EC 1) driving license and upgraded to a code 14 (EC) driving license in 2012.

Although she did not make it to the top three of the Articulated Category, she will not be discouraged to participate in future.

"I love driving and it has always been my dream to drive huge trucks. I want to encourage other women to come forward and break the boundary and the stigma that trucks are only driven by men.

I know that there are few of us driving those huge trucks and I will also encourage other women to join.

Competing with men is overwhelming and I will not stop until more people realize that women can do it too," said Hlatshwayo.

She added that the competition was part of a training that will improve her skills in order to contribute to a safe and crash free environment.

Speaking at the event, Govan Mbeki Executive Mayor, Ms Lindi Masina congratulated the winners especially the female drivers and thanked the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison for holding the event in the municipality.

She said that as a municipality they support initiatives by the department to reduce road crashes and enhance awareness in communities about road safety.

By Zandile Mandlazi

MEC Shongwe takes a bus to work during Transport Month



MEC Shongwe with Ligwalagwala FM's DJ Shabba Mavuso and other passengers travelling from Pienaar in one of Overall Friday campaigns.

Transport Month is usually characterized by a number of road safety activities in the whole country.

During this month, road safety is emphasized through various programmes and initiatives by government hence there is a need to intensify initiatives and campaigns aimed at educating and involving communities in the fight against road crashes.

Government also uses this month to raise awareness on the important role of transport in the economy and to encourage participation from civil society and business, including the provision of a safe and more affordable, accessible and reliable transport system in the country.

This year, Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Vusi Shongwe together with DJ Shabba [Dumisa Mavuso] of Ligwalagwala FM and other media practitioners embarked on an Overall Friday activity where commuters and drivers of public transport were educated about road safety.

The MEC, accompanied by the media, boarded a Buscor bus from Kabokweni to Mbombela where he interacted with the commuters on issues relating to road safety and crime

prevention. Buscor CEO, Ms Norah Fakude also accompanied the MEC. Shongwe says that the participation of media in government initiatives will assist government to mobilize communities to participate in programmes aimed at improving road safety.

“Road safety is not a responsibility of government alone; that is why we always encourage community and stakeholders’ participation.

We cannot win the fight against road carnage unless road users are willing to meet government half way,” said Shongwe.

He also thanked Buscor for providing reliable and safe transport to the community and emphasized that other public transport owners should follow suit.

According to him, road crashes that involve public transport can be eliminated if owners can ensure that their vehicles are safe and roadworthy.



DJ Shabba and MEC Shongwe interacting with Buscor Chief Executive, Ms. Norah Fakude

By: Zandile Mandlazi.

CPF Contributes to crime reduction, says Pillay



Provincial CPF Board Chairperson: Kevin Pillay.

According to Mpumalanga Community Police Forum (CPF) Provincial Board Chairperson Mr Kevin Pillay, CPF involvement in the fight against crime has yielded success over the years in the province.

"The fact that we have been able to restructure and ensure full functionality of the CPF in all 86 stations shows improvement in crime prevention," he says.

Among others, Pillay says that the CPF has contributed immensely to the reduction of bank robberies and ATM bombings in Witbank and Vosman. Witbank and Vosman were among the provincial crime hotspots.

"We regularly get involved in awareness campaigns with a

specific focus on the type of crime that affects the area.

This year, we will put more focus on school safety, police killings, trio crimes and rhino poaching.

"We have also been involved in the formulation of the National CPF Strategy and the Youth Crime Prevention Strategy. Through the CPF Strategy, the roles and functions of the CPF will be outlined.

CPF members are not police officers, their role is to give information to the police and also participate in operations with the police; however, all operations must be supervised by police," says Pillay.

According to him, the performance of all CPF stations and clusters is being monitored on a quarterly basis. The 86 stations submit their

reports to the clusters, then from the clusters they are sent to the province.

"That is why we have our own Implementation Plan where we conduct door to door, awareness campaigns and visiting old people's centres.

In 2015, we conducted a number of activities including building a house for a destitute family in Piet Retief," he adds.

According to him, this year, the CPF is planning to conduct road shows across the province with MEC Vusi Shongwe.

The road shows will ensure that feedback is given to communities on issues and complaints raised previously pertaining to crime.

He further states that the challenge they are facing currently is budget and resources to implement their programmes.

Pillay indicates that a policy on funding and allocation of resources for CPF activities is currently receiving attention from the Minister of Police.

He has meanwhile encouraged community members to join the CPF sub forums through their community structures. He adds that all members who want to join the CPF structures will be screened before they could be accepted.

By: Zandile Mandlazi

Learners should not be used in service protests - MEC Shongwe



MEC Shongwe addressing learners at Masizakhe Secondary School.

It is important that learners are in classes and learning at all times and are not made part of violent service delivery protests as it has been the case in the past.

Therefore parents and teachers should not allow malicious people to lure children to participate in violent service delivery protests.

This sentiments were expressed by Community Safety, Security and Liaison MEC Vusi Shongwe when he was addressing learners and teachers at Chrissiesmeer Secondary School in Msukaligwa Local Municipality during the schools re-opening in January this year.

His visit to the school was part of the annual Back to School Programme by the Department of Education whereby public representatives visit various schools across the province.

The MEC said parents and teachers should be wary of individuals who badly influence children and put them at the forefront of such violent protests.

He also added that in order for effective learning and teaching to take place, schools should become crime free zones.

He said that the learners should be disciplined and be at school on time at all times so that they are able to perform well academically.

He has further encouraged learners to also stay away from drugs and alcohol so that they are not distracted from their studies. "Do not let alcohol and drugs distract you from your studies.

You should listen to your parents and teachers and focus on your studies so that you can become future community builders," the MEC said.

He has bemoaned growing teenage pregnancy in some of the schools saying that children should abstain from sexual activities because their future become adversely affected.

He has added that the department will continue to work with SAPS on various campaigns to ensure crime is eradicated in schools.

He said that it was also important for learners to report suspicious activities to their parents or their teachers.



Learners posing with MEC shortly before they proceeded to their various learning centres.

Story & Picture by: Justice Nyalunga.

Paralegal Workshop conducted at Msholozzi



Community Safety Officer, Benjamin Mthembu.

Residents of Msholozzi Village near White River in Mbombela were exposed to government programmes in rural settings during a Paralegal Workshop that was conducted in the area recently.

The workshop was part of the Rural Safety Project currently being implemented by the department across the province.

The purpose of the workshop was to encourage farming communities to participate in government's crime prevention initiatives and to conscientise them about their rights and responsibilities as residents.

The department's Community Safety Officer in Ehlanzeni Region, Benjamin Mthembu says he hopes the workshop will assist in improving crime pre-

vention in Msholozzi. He has also reflected on the absence of a structure that could link the police and the local communities saying the CPF at White River should assist in closing the gap.

During the workshop various departments presented to the community on various services that they offer particularly communities who are living in rural areas.

According to Mthembu, some of the challenges at Msholozzi include domestic violence and the high number of rape cases in areas such as Msholozzi, Phumlani, Hopeville and Status.

He has also highlighted the challenge posed by influx of foreigners who do not have documentation.

Mthembu said some of the contributory factors towards crime at Msholozzi is absence of streetlights and existence of illegal liquor trading outlets.

As part of addressing some of the challenges, Mthembu has called for increased police visibility especially during the weekends and at night.

He has pleaded with the CPF Chairperson to join the Station Crime Combating Forum at the Station.

He has also called on community members to report crime and also expose illegal shebeens and places where crime suspects hide.

The project was supported by stakeholders such as SAPS, Department of Social Development, Home Affairs, NICRO, SANCA and Mbombela Local Municipality.



By: Moeti Mmusi.

Research project to improve policing service to communities

Police Ministry has initiated a Research Project aimed at improving policing in the country. In this project, data is being collected from various police stations and stakeholders including community members.

The Policy and Research Unit in the Mpumalanga Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison has already visited six of fifteen clusters in the province to collect data at all the stations of each cluster. Three communities in each cluster also took part.

In community gatherings, the data was collected from Community Police Forum members, private security companies, NGOs, private businesses and general communities.

According to Policy and Research Senior Manager Ms Duduzile Thwala, the purpose of the project is to establish the police needs and priorities and also the challenges faced in dealing with crime in various communities.

“The research findings will also assist in terms of determining allocation of resources and budgets to various provinces. It will make the Ministry to understand policing needs,” says Thwala.

During their interactions with the stations that they visited so far it has emerged that most of the stations do not have adequate resources such as vehicles



Policy and Research Senior Manager: Duduzile Thwala filling in the research questionnaires in one of the police stations.

and this often makes it difficult for them to respond to crime scenes.

On the other hand some of the stakeholders complained about police's response time, corruption and misuse of state resources by some SAPS members.

They have also cited crime challenges associated with alcohol abuse saying that should comply with operating times as required by the trading licenses.

Thwala indicated that they have also discovered that most community members are not aware about some of the professional services offered by SAPS.

She adds: “most people are not aware about services such Victim Empowerment Programmes at stations, Witness Protection,

and Child Protection Services among others.

She says lack of knowledge on policing services could be one of the reasons why some cases end up being withdrawn because witnesses are afraid to testify not knowing that there are services that ensure their protection.

Thwala further calls on community members to attend the remaining sessions that will be conducted in the five remaining clusters saying that stakeholder and community involvement in the fight against crime is vital.

Story & picture by: Zandile Mandlazi

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VISION

"A safe, secure, crime and road accident free Mpumalanga Province"

MISSION STATEMENT

To improve community and road traffic safety through mass mobilization, oversee the performance of the police and provision of security services.

VALUES

The department strives to pursue excellence and professionalism through the following:

- ✓ Inclusiveness
- ✓ Accountability and Transparency
- ✓ Diligent Responsive and Approachable
- ✓ Integrity and Honesty
- ✓ Fair and Reasonable

SERVICE STANDARDS

- We will consult all our clients about the level and quality of services they will receive;
- We will provide assistance and information in the language of your choice;
- We will respond to all complaints received within 14 working days and we will refer all complaints that falls outside the Department to the relevant Department within 7 working days and you will be informed accordingly of such referral;
- We will provide citizens with 8 hours of service each business day and our hours of work will be posted in each office or delivery site;
- We will respond to media enquiries within three hours;
- We will ensure that our help desk offers fast and friendly service and that our clients do not wait more than five minutes without being attended to;
- We will pay all our creditors within 30 days of receipt of an original invoice;
- We will, confidentially and without delay, attend to problems and concerns of clients within 14 days and we will immediately investigate transgressions brought to our attention;
- We will provide all our services promptly and in an economical, efficient and effective manner in order to give you the best possible value for money.

Report domestic violence on the following number:

086 001 0111



"Together Let's Fight Crime and Road Carnage"

